

Interracial News Service

A DIGEST OF TRENDS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN HUMAN RELATIONS

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A YEAR AFTER THE DECISION

Decree Issued

The Supreme Court ruled (on May 31) that local Federal judges should have almost complete discretion in bringing about racially integrated public schools.

The court set no time limit for integration but directed that the lower courts require "a prompt and reasonable start toward full compliance." It gave the local courts authority to grant "additional time . . . to carry out the ruling," but directed that "the burden rests upon the defendants to establish that such time is necessary."

. . . A number of Southern officials praised the Supreme Court for allowing the basic decision to be regulated locally, but many of them repeated their belief that the original decision was wrong.

In New York, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People hailed the decision as opening "new avenues of democracy for all the children of the nation." The NAACP asserted that the enforcement process would not be a lengthy one. . . .

The opinion said the lower courts may consider a number of problems that may arise in integrating school systems that have been segregated for decades, leaving the plain implication that the high court was not trying to rush the local courts into action. . . .

Evidence of the wide discretion given local courts in deciding how fast integration should proceed were two citations of past Supreme Court decisions, footnoted to the court's opinion. Both involved technical questions of the authority of a local court, and in both the Supreme Court ruled that the local courts had wide discretion to decide the question at issue. These citations appeared to lessen the possibility that attorneys will be able to have the lower courts issue injunctions to speed integration.

However, the court . . . did not back-track in any way from its finding of last May that segregation is unconstitutional and must go. The court said that "the vitality of these constitutional principles cannot be allowed to yield simply because of disagreement with them."

In outlining the problem for the local judges, the court said that school authorities "have the primary responsibility for . . . solving these problems." The lower courts were directed to consider whether the actions of these authorities "constitute good-faith implementation of the governing constitutional principles."

It said the local courts, "because of their proximity to local conditions . . . can best perform this judicial appraisal." . . .

The local courts, in judging whether the states are acting in good faith, "may consider problems related to administration, arising from the physical condition of the school plant, the school transportation system, personnel, revision of school districts and attendance areas . . . and revision of local laws and regulations which may be necessary in solving the foregoing problems."

All of this, it appeared, would require extensive hearings and arguments in the local courts, and (the) decision explicitly recognized the possibility of "further hearings." . . .

Chief Justice Warren's opinion . . . took note of the fact that "substantial steps to eliminate racial discrimination in public schools have already been taken." He pointed to "substantial progress" in the District of Columbia, Kansas and Delaware—all involved in the test cases which the court considered in reaching its basic decision. . . .
(*New York Herald Tribune*, June 1)

* * *

A Report

Nearly 250,000 Negro and white children are attending classes peaceably together in 500 public elementary and secondary schools, which, until last year, had been for the exclusive use of boys and girls of one race or the other.

This introduction of democratic patterns in education is the direct result of the United States Supreme Court's historic anti-segregation decision, the first anniversary of which (was) May 17.

In the twelve months since that day, information compiled by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People indicates that school desegregation has been initiated in the District of Columbia and the City of Baltimore, in two towns in Arkansas, 29 counties in West Virginia, 30 communities in Missouri, five towns in Delaware, six cities in Kansas, and scattered communities in Arizona and New Mexico. . . .

The matter in these pages is presented for the reader's information. Unless so stated, it is not to be construed as reflecting the attitudes or positions of the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations or of The National Council of Churches.

Attending the newly desegregated schools are an estimated 250,000 Negro and white children. Admittedly, this is only a tiny minority of the 9,821,000 white and 2,397,000 Negro children enrolled in schools in the segregated areas. Except in Washington, Negro boys and girls are in the minority in most of the schools of mixed attendance.

Included in the 500 desegregated schools are those located in four of the six communities involved in cases ruled on by the Supreme Court. Following the decision, Washington, D. C. initiated desegregation. Earlier the Topeka, Kans., school board voted "to terminate segregation in the elementary schools as rapidly as practicable." The two school districts in the Delaware case already had admitted Negro pupils in compliance with a state supreme court ruling. Only Clarendon County, South Carolina, and Prince Edward County, Virginia, have refused to heed the Court's decision. . . .

Although the color bar in professional and graduate school training had been breached by the Sweatt and McLaurin decisions . . . most of the Southern universities bar Negro undergraduates, and universities in five of the Southern states still refuse to admit Negro students to any courses with white students.

After May 17, West Virginia opened its 11 state institutions of higher learning, including two for Negroes, to all qualified students, irrespective of race. Interestingly, the number of white students attracted to the two formerly all-Negro colleges exceeded the number of Negro students attracted to the nine previously lily-white colleges. White students enrolled in the state colleges at Bluefield and at Institute are a sizable minority.

The University of Maryland opened all its schools to Negro applicants, as did the state-supported colleges of Missouri. The University of Delaware and the University of Louisville had previously let down their barriers against Negro undergraduates. A number of denominational colleges in the South likewise began admitting Negro students. . . .

Perhaps the most effective job in school desegregation has been done in West Virginia and Missouri, a survey conducted by the NAACP indicates. . . .

Of the 44 West Virginia counties in which Negro school-age children live, 29 have initiated desegregation, including 12 which have completely integrated. In Missouri, 110 of 177 school districts re-

porting Negro children have opened previously white schools to colored pupils.

W. W. Trent, state superintendent of schools, reports 12 high schools, 37 junior high schools and 86 elementary schools have been desegregated in West Virginia. These schools have a total enrollment of 45,596 of which only 1,008 are Negro pupils, 427 of whom attend high schools. Integration has also extended to school buses. There are now 538 colored children being transported daily in 88 buses with 3,421 white youngsters. . . .

West Virginia was the scene of demonstrations against desegregation. At White Sulphur Springs . . . a desegregation order was rescinded after an adult-inspired "strike" among white high school students. . . .

The Missouri story is similar to that of West Virginia. Desegregation has proceeded with a minimum of hostility. It is "working smoothly" and "we have encountered no major problems," reports A. L. Redmon, Missouri State Supervisor of Negro Schools. Incomplete returns reported by Mr. Redmon indicate a mixed enrollment of 5,000 Negro and white children in 89 high and 41 elementary schools of the state. Most of the integration has taken place at the high school level with 5,200 colored students attending classes with 35,600 white boys and girls. . . . (*Norfolk Journal and Guide*, May 14)

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An Appraisal

In the year elapsed since the Court spoke, the South has witnessed considerable confusion, much indecision, more uneasiness and a few bold experiments.

The biggest and the boldest experiments look like successes. It is too early to give them the unqualified accolade.

A few of the smaller ones failed.

The Deep South, which announced at the beginning that it would not desegregate, has not. Political leaders in Georgia, Mississippi and South Carolina have been actively planning ways to evade the spirit of the Court's ruling.

In Georgia, the man who ran for governor declaring "Come hell or high water, races will not be mixed in Georgia schools," was elected.

In the absence of a court decree to give the decision effect, however, areas planning resistance have been working in a vacuum. Not knowing what the law will demand, they have nothing but a statement of principle to plan against.

While the Deep South awaits the decree, many communities in the border states have moved toward compliance without it. In the most daring tests—notably in Baltimore and Washington, where complete desegregation was ordered, and in St. Louis where the high schools were desegregated—the big problems that will characterize desegregation's aftermath are beginning to emerge.

Two long-range problems, one for the Negro and one for the educators, have already come to focus.

To the Negro, it has become apparent that physical desegregation of school

buildings is not the end of his striving for equality. A large degree of segregation is being maintained in the schools by segregated housing patterns in the border cities. . . .

For the educators, the problem is finally to face squarely the question that has always plagued Southern education. That is, how to give adequate education in a higher proportion of students with low socio-economic backgrounds?

Baltimore and Washington school people agree with the accepted anthropological view that there is no correlation between race and intellectual ability. Yet social and economic environment, they agree, is reflected in a child's scholastic performance.

The Negro, who has generally had the worst of socio-economic life in the South, swells the proportion of slow learners, the maladjusted and the backward student in the all-white schools.

This, the administrators believe, will intensify an old problem, not create a new one. . . . (*Atlanta Constitution*, May 17)

CHURCHES IN THE NEWS

Methodist

Mississippi Methodist white women took a strong stand for racial fair play (recently) and in the process delivered a sounding slap to "white Citizens Councils."

Meeting (in Jackson) the Woman's Society of Christian Service of the Mississippi Methodist Conference voted 129-62 for a charter calling for liberal racial policies in the church.

The women voted for the charter after hearing Dr. Dan Whitsett, pastor of First Methodist Church, Sylacauga, call the Citizens Councils "barriers to good racial relationships."

The 10-point charter adopted is as follows:

1. Persons to fill positions within the official body or staff of the Woman's Division of Christian Service shall be selected on the basis of qualifications without regard to race.

2. The institutions and projects of the division are instruments by which we may translate the Christian ideals and attitudes of this charter into action.

(a) We will employ all missionaries, deaconesses and other workers, regardless of racial or national background, on the basis of qualifications, and the promise they show for effective work in the field to which they will be sent.

(b) The facilities and opportunities offered by our projects and institutions shall be open to all people without discrimination because of racial or national background.

(c) Where law prohibits or custom prevents the immediate achievement of these objectives, workers and local boards are charged with the responsibility of creating a public opinion which may result in changing such laws and customs.

3. All Promotional plans of the woman's division must take into account

the various racial groups within its organization pattern and related to its program emphasis.

4. Special guidance toward the integration of all groups into the life and work of the church shall be given to the auxiliary societies of the woman's division.

5. Summer schools of missions and Christian service of both jurisdictions and conferences are urged to seek increasingly to establish a working relationship across racial lines in planning and carrying out all phases of the programs, taking into account geographical accessibility of groups involved.

6. Summer school subsidies provided for or by any jurisdiction or conference should be available when requested for use at the school most accessible to the person receiving the subsidy.

7. Workshops, seminars and institutes should be set up on a geographical basis with full opportunity for initial participation by all racial groups in the making and execution of the plans.

8. Local societies and guilds should give increased emphasis to the working together of all racial groups in study and action that will affect the life of the church and community.

9. All jurisdiction and conference societies are urged to work for the enactment of policies at all Methodist assembly grounds that will enable the full participation of any racial group in any phase of the assembly program.

10. The woman's division has consistently observed its established policy for holding its meetings in places where all racial groups can have access to all facilities without discrimination in any form.

To further extend this policy, jurisdiction and conference societies are urged to work for its implementation as a basic step toward building a Christian fellowship within the organization and toward an impact on the community as a whole. (*Afro-American*, May 7)

* * *

It appeared that a minor split may occur in the ranks of the Methodist Woman's Society of Christian Service as a result of a "liberal" racial policy announcement by the officials of the organization (recently). . . .

A leader of the dissident faction, Mrs. Sam U. Smith of Loyise, said: "We cannot continue to follow every policy set forth by the woman's division with no protest at all, unless we are working for the same goals they are. Every one can see this will soon lead to complete integration. It is my opinion that the women must open their eyes to the facts, take a firm stand and say, We have gone far enough." (*Kansas City Call*, May 13)

* * *

The New York Conference of Methodists . . . voted unanimously to petition the 1956 national conference of the Methodist Church to abolish the Central Jurisdiction. The Central Jurisdiction, overlapping all geographical jurisdictions

in the United States, is comprised wholly of Negro churches.

A movement to abolish the Central Jurisdiction was defeated at the national conference in 1952.

Sentiment among 350 clergymen and laymen attending the conference indicated that the movement has a chance of succeeding next year in view of a recent Supreme Court decision abolishing segregation in schools. . . . (*Atlanta Constitution*, May 13)

* * *

The New York East Conference of the Methodist Church continued its fight against racial discrimination in the church organization by unanimously adopting a resolution urging three Methodist publishing companies in the South to end discrimination.

The resolution charged "discrimination in hiring policies and in eating, drinking and comfort facilities" maintained by the firms.

The conference made it clear that the resolution was not directed against the New York office of one firm, which does not practice discrimination.

The conference launched its anti-segregation drive . . . by inviting eight Negro churches in this area to join. . . . (*New York World-Telegram and Sun*, May 28)

* * *

More than 200 Methodist clergymen and laymen from all over the state, (Mississippi) formed an association to preserve segregation within the Church.

(This group has) adopted a resolution setting forth the following program:

Opposition to any statements by Methodist publications, conferences, officials or other authority that seek to change the present system of separate jurisdictions for white and Negro churches.

Development of a plan to inform Methodists about moves to promote full integration within the church.

Steps to ask all delegates to Methodist conferences to oppose any "liberalization" of the present racial policy.

A request to Church leaders to give Methodists "frank and factual" statements on how integration would affect the Church. . . . (*Religious News Weekly*, April 6)

* * *

A M E

It may come as a surprise to some people to hear that the African Methodist Episcopal Church is not and never has been exclusively Negro. The denomination's annual Council of Bishops and Connectional Council, meeting (in Texas) recently, with 5,000 in attendance, adopted a resolution which read as follows:

"People of all races have always been welcome in our churches. Our denomination was organized as a protest against discrimination. With this in mind, we urge you to be more forceful in spreading information to the world that our membership is not limited by color, class

or caste. While we believe in integration in religion and education, it necessarily follows that we believe in integration in everything civic. . . . The historic decision of the Supreme Court of May 17, 1954, should pave the way for complete integration along all lines. To this end let us work and pray." (*Christian Century*, April 20)

* * *

Protestant Episcopal

Because of its conviction that segregation is "contrary to the will of God," the Episcopal Diocesan Convention of New Jersey . . . decreed integration in all parishes and missions.

Calling for "the integration of all people," the Rt. Rev. Alfred F. Banyard, newly-installed bishop of the diocese, told delegates of the 171st Convention . . . in his first annual message:

"A great progress is being made in overcoming segregation and discrimination in every phase of life throughout the country.

"It is a Christian truism to state that such practices toward any race in the church as well as in the secular community are contrary to the will of God.

"The church and its members everywhere must stand firmly for the integration of all people and practice that principle of living sincerely at all times and in all places."

Bishop Banyard urged the Convention to pass a resolution condemning segregation and discrimination within the diocese.

The delegates responded with a unanimous vote. . . . (*Afro-American*, May 21)

ARMED FORCES INTEGRATION

The Negro citizen in the Armed Forces is now utilized on the basis of individual merit and proficiency in meeting the needs of the Services.

Throughout the Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps, fully integrated units have replaced the all-Negro units which, until recent years, formed the only channel of military service for Negro enlistees and draftees since Colonial times.

Thorough evaluation of the battle-tested results to date indicates a marked increase in over-all combat effectiveness through integration.

Economies in manpower, material, and money have resulted from the elimination of racially duplicated facilities and operations.

The program has advanced more rapidly than had been considered possible in some quarters, and there have been no untoward incidents.

The implementation of policies providing for opportunity among civilian employees lags far behind as compared with Armed Forces integration.

The ROTC, the National Guard, and other civilian components pose complex problems involving some major factors which are beyond military control.

Community relations as regard race

are greatly improved, but much remains to be done to harmoniously effect equality of treatment for Negro service personnel.

The military community as such has added new and valuable dimensions to such concepts as neighborhood and brotherhood.

The Armed Forces, within their own sphere, have developed notable examples of racial coordination and integration in housing, transportation, religious worship, schooling, recreation, and other aspects of community life for service personnel and their families.

Segregation has been eliminated in facilities for civilian employees.

All service schools and training programs are open without racial restrictions. Already, there are tangible returns in officer promotions and in an increasing supply of technically trained specialists.

Policies and programs currently in effect give promise of further resolving many of the perplexing problems which center around situations where race is a factor.

The impact, national and international, of the advances under the program of integration in the Armed Services has been distinctly and forcefully in support of the policy of the American Government. (Excerpted from "Integration in the Armed Services", A Progress Report prepared by the office of James C. Evans, Civilian Assistant.)

HOUSING

Study Planned

Convinced that race relations in housing is a major American problem, now that segregation in public education has been outlawed, the Fund for the Republic has launched a \$100,000 nationwide study of the housing of minority groups.

A 17-man commission . . . will conduct the study, . . .

While the study will be national in scope . . . the commission would be especially interested in what metropolitan centers are doing to see that Negroes have access to decent housing, and what effective methods have been developed for dealing with prejudices and racial tensions in both old and new neighborhoods. . . .

National Negro leaders have long insisted that housing restrictions against Negroes were out of line with recent progress made in employment opportunities, school integration, and in the armed forces.

"Open Occupancy Housing", a reprinted article, is available, free of charge in quantities up to 200, from the Department of Racial and Cultural Relations.

The United States Supreme Court ruled against restrictive covenants in its May 13, 1948 decisions, but devices employed to get around the decision have included withholding of credit from non-white buyers, trustee devices of holding title to blocks of individually owned properties, intimidation of brokers, private "gentle-

men's agreements," and even actual violence, according to the National Urban League.

An even worse housing situation has been envisioned by Negro leaders as the result of the Supreme Court's school desegregation decision, who foresee the possible drawing of even heavier lines between Negro and white neighborhoods in order to forestall school integration. (*Christian Science Monitor*, May 20)

* * *

N. Y. Law Extended

Gov. Averell Harriman (of New York) signed into law two measures extending the ban against discrimination in housing. . . .

One measure amends the civil rights law to ban discrimination because of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, in housing accommodations receiving publicly insured financing, such as FHA.

The other law, an amendment to the executive law, gives the State Commission Against Discrimination jurisdiction to enforce all existing state laws against discrimination in public and publicly assisted housing. . . .

Gov. Harriman hailed the laws as "an important step forward" as New York is the first state to outlaw discrimination in indirectly federally-aided housing.

He said the Empire State was again "leading the nation in forward-looking legislation." . . . (*N. Y. World Telegram & Sun*, April 15)

* * *

Local Problem

Citizens if this famous resort, (Atlantic City, N. J.), whose mayor refuses to appoint an urgently needed Civil Rights Commission, learned to their embarrassment . . . that this can become another "Cicero" or Trumbull Park, Chicago, where minority housing is concerned.

They were aroused from their civic lethargy (on) April 25, when hoodlums smashed a window and burned a five-foot wooden cross in front of the apartment home of Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Downing . . .

Mayor Joseph Altman . . . condemned the cross-burning as "unconscionable and un-American," and warned that "we shall not tolerate it," and promised full protection to the Downings.

The mayor issued a statement after a committee from the NAACP had conferred with him and the city commissioners, and requested that they fix a policy for preventing any further similar intimidation of colored families moving into white areas. . . . (*Afro-American*, May 14)

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Encampment For Citizenship

An increased opportunity for young men and women, 18 to 23, to qualify for scholarships to the six-week summer Encampment For Citizenship, in New York City, has been announced. William G. Shannon, executive director of the

Encampment For Citizenship, has said that additional partial and full scholarships to the 1955 session, to be held June 26-August 6, are now available. He said, "More than one thousand young adults from communities throughout the nation have already attended the Encampment in the past. In this Tenth Anniversary year, scholarship aid has been extended to enable more young people who are deserving to attend this summer's program."

Students will study politics, economics, problems of farm, rural, and minority groups, the United States in world affairs, and the important part youth is taking in American community affairs. They will meet prominent government officials, legislators, educators, editors, and civic leaders. They will take field trips to important places of interest in and around New York. . . .

Mr. Shannon said, "Students are selected on their leadership qualifications. . . . Coming from every background and every walk of life, they will share their experiences and exchange their ideas. . . .

The study program will include a full recreation schedule. On the campus are complete facilities including swimming, tennis, softball, music room, library, and a theatre. The campus is just a subway ride from New York City where cultural and recreational riches are plentiful and convenient.

The tuition is regularly \$350, which covers all costs for the six-week term except traveling and personal expenses. Students live on the campus. According to Mr. Shannon, partial and full scholarships for tuition are often provided by the organization sponsoring the student, such as the church group, school, "Y", 4-H, newspaper, or other community agency. However, the Encampment, itself, is making additional scholarships available to deserving applicants who would otherwise be unable to attend. . . .

The Encampment Admission Committee is considering applications until June 20, 1955. . . . (From *News Release* from the Encampment For Citizenship, May 25)

Interested persons are urged to write directly to the Encampment For Citizenship, 2 West 64th Street, New York 23, N. Y., for further details on the educational program and student activities for this summer's session.

* * *

Annual Interdenominational Institutes on Racial and Cultural Relations will be held this summer at

Lincoln Seminary, Lincoln University, Pa., July 18-23

Pepperdine College, Los Angeles, Calif., August 1-6

These institutes seek to serve the practical needs of the Protestant churches as they move toward the realization of non-segregated churches in non-segregated communities.

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Workshop in the Improvement of Human Relations

Boston University Human Relations Center, North Andover, Mass., July 18-August 12

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Social Action Institute

Congregational Center, Salem End Road, Framingham Center, Mass., July 26-30

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Workshop on Race and Intergroup Relations

Bradley University, Peoria, Ill., June 13-24

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Institute on Human Relations

Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Ind., July 10-15

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Workshop on Human Relations and Intergroup Education

Syracuse University, Syracuse, N. Y., July 5-August 12

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Chicago Social Action Institute

Chicago Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill., September 12-16

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